

A  
LETTER  
FROM THE  
QUAKERS  
TO THE  
Mayor and Sheriffs  
OF  
BRISTOL.

WE have weekly the afflicting News of your Merciless Cruelty towards our Innocent Friends, and though their sober Carriage, their inoffensive Actions, their regular Walkings, their upright Dealings, and their circumspect Lives, might merit far better usage from you, yet you go on to Persecute them even to Death, and with so much violence as justly gives us cause to believe you Glory in your Shame. You have no regard to their Innocence, whilst the Proud *Papists* struts amongst you like a Jay on a Perch unpunished, for whom the rigour of the Law was chiefly intended, the distressed Dissenting Protestants are the subjects of your Fury. These are the people that must endure your severity. Why? Whats the matter? Only this, they love their God better than you, they love their King better than you, and they are more obedient to Gods Laws than you: would they Swear, Drink, Curse, Whore, and Prophane the Sabbath, as too many of your *Tory* Tribe do, you would hug them in your Arms, put them in your Bosoms, and lay them close to your Hearts: they would be as the Apple of your Eye: would they but Conform to your Vices, and Equalize your Debauches, you would not value whether they Conformed to the Laws or not; but here's the reason why you vent your Gall, and spit your Poyson at them, they are more Righteous than you. They hate Swearing, Perjury, and Lying, they abominate the too frequent Vices that Mount the present Stage. Were they men of no Religion, but would live like Atheists or Heathens, you would give them no disturbance: but because they are careful to please God, and fearful to offend the King, because they make a Conscience of their Words and Ways,



Ways, therefore you study to Torment them: but shall this sin go unpunished? If our Laws sleep, the Almightyes do not, if a Parliament be forgotten? If their Rods cannot reach you here. The strokes of Omnipotency will surely awake you hereafter. Go on, make your Furnace seven times hotter, add afflictions to the afflicted, consume their Cattle, exhaust their Treasure, drein their Purfes, waift their Goods, and destroy their Persons; yet know that for all this God will bring you to Judgment. Would we abhor Gods Ways, and the Kings Laws, and but abhor Parliaments and Associations, we might go unpunished; would we but rail against *Shaftsbury*, and the rest of the *Protesting Lords*, and give Votes for those that would cut our Throats, then we might be reckoned amongst the number of your Darlings: but because we act according to the Dictates of our Consciences, and endeavour to make the Scripture our Rule and Guide to everlasting Happiness; because we cannot run with the Multitude to do evil, therefore you thunder out your Anathemas against us, and fill the Goals with harmless Lambs, whilst the Ravening Wolves are suffered to ramble whithersoever they please. Are you Deaf? Hear you not the complaints of the Oppressed, are your Ears stopt that you do not regard the Sighs and Groans of those that languish unjustly in Prison? Wheres your pretended Justice? Whether is your seeming Piety fled, surely they are gone Passagers to *Morroco* to Convert the Heathens, in some of the *Bristol Ships*. Oh *Bristol*! *Bristol*! How art thou fallen from the top of Goodness, to the very bottom of Evil. Thou wast once famed for Sobriety and Zeal, and now thy very Inhabitants stink in the Nostrils of sober men. The Righteous suffer and none regard it, Wickedness is encouraged and goes scotfree, whilst the poor Servants of Christ Jesus, are made the may-game of the Town, and as Chickens for the Ravens Kites to devour. Oh! Think if you go on to Persecute the Innocent, what will become of you when your White Rods and your Black Bodies shall be broken in pieces, what will you do when Death shall summons you to Gods Tribunal? What will you say when he shall call you to give an account of your Actions? will it be enough to plead the 35th. of Queen *Elizabeth*, at that time? No, She her self will be a witness against you, and tell you, that she never intended to couple the filly Sheep and Ravenous Woolf together, She never design'd that the *English Lamb*, and the *Roman Bull* should both draw in one Yoak. But what avails it to write to you, or speak to you, you have Armed your selves with a Resolution to run down all that shall stand in opposition to you, let our Plea be never so just, our Request never so honest, our Petitions never so Prevalent, ye will not hear us, you have stopt your Ears with *Roman Wool*, so that you are resolved to continue deaf to all the Arguments that might perswade you to put a stop to your Hellish Practices. But when Conscience once awakens, Oh! what Trembling will seiz your Joints, Oh! What Howling will possess you and what bitterness of Spirit will you be in. Do not run on in such unwarrantable ways lest whilst you bespeak Peace to your selves a suddain Destruction overtake you.

Farewel.

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